



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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IN REPLY REFER TO:  
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July 28, 1998

Instruction Memorandum No. NM-98-041  
Expires: 9/30/99

To: All Field Office Managers

From: Deputy State Director, Division of Resource Planning,  
Use and Protection

Subject: Dollar Limit for Federal Drainage Cases

ISSUE: Increase the threshold of Federal drainage cases to \$7,500.

OBJECTIVE: Increasing the threshold to \$7,500 for Federal drainage cases should reduce the number of backlogged cases and allow field office staff to work higher priority cases.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY: Currently we have a policy to retire Federal drainage cases with less than \$4,000 of royalty value (NM IM 90-427). The \$4,000 threshold was established to make drainage case processing more cost effective in a time when our case backlog was considerable. Although all of our Field Offices have done well using this policy to reduce the case backlog, the cost effectiveness of this threshold value came into question during a recent informal program review.

Presently, the cost of completing a drainage case generally far exceeds \$4,000. Costs include case identification, records reviews, report and correspondence preparation, and time spent responding to appeals to the Interior Board of Land Appeals. Raising the threshold to \$7,500 will bring the return more in line with anticipated costs.


This policy is for Federal cases only. As part of our trust responsibility for Indian lands, we must continue to maintain and work all Indian drainage cases, regardless of value.

IMPLEMENTATION AND SCHEDULE: This policy change is effective upon receipt of this memorandum.

COORDINATION: None.

BUDGET IMPLICATIONS: None.

CONTACT PERSON: Direct questions concerning this information to Rick Wymer (505) 438-7411.

  
John Broderick  
Acting Deputy State Director

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